

FOR THE RECORD

Testimony by Northeast Utilities, Thomas Burns, Director of Training

February 28, 2011

Northeast Utilities has been working closely with the Connecticut Community College System for the last few years on a number of energy/utilities initiatives in support of education and training for the existing energy workforce as well as helping to prepare the energy workforce pipeline in the next five to ten years.

The Connecticut Community College System last year prepared and submitted a grant proposal to the US Department of Energy "Workforce Development Training for the Electric Power Grid". Northeast Utilities was the key industry partner in this effort. Although the System was not awarded an US Department of Energy grant for this proposal, the Coalition for Adult and Experiential Learning located in Chicago and the energy branch of CAEL, the Energy Providers Coalition for Education (EPCE), a nationally recognized organization of energy utilities providers did receive such funding. The Connecticut Community College System agreed to serve as a willing and innovative partner to work together with CAEL and EPCE, Northeast Utilities and Bismarck State College in North Dakota to create a template for an articulation agreement in which an energy/utilities option will be created under the College of Technology within the system. This effort and interest speaks to the flexibility and innovation occurring at the system level, looking to bring consistency, portability, uniformity and new areas of expertise to the entire system of twelve community colleges, working alongside willing industry partners.

The Connecticut Community College System also supported the creation of Utilities Scholarships, in partnership with Northeast Utilities and piloted at Naugatuck Valley Community College. The System helped to facilitate the partnership, supported innovative approaches and helped to guide the result of a consistent uniform energy curriculum approved by Northeast Utilities. This effort is a great example of a strong public/private partnership.

The Connecticut Community College System is a key educational and training partner with the Green Jobs Council, a committee under the Connecticut Employment and Training Council (CETC), and serves as one of the primary partners to CETC's recently awarded USDOL Energy Training Partnership Grant. The Connecticut Community College System is also an active member of the Connecticut Energy Workforce Consortium, an organization of educational providers and traditional and alternative energy providers focused on energy workforce development in the state. The System was also the first in the nation to receive all four rounds of funding through the USDOL Community Based Job Training Grants, and was also the first in the nation to receive funding for its Sustainable Operations and Alternative and Renewable Energy Grant (SOAR).